



STATEMENT DJ345

Watchtower Reverses Itself on Resurrection Doctrine

In a major doctrinal reversal, *The Watchtower* magazine of June 1, 1988, announced a new viewpoint on the resurrection: the individuals who were killed when God rained fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah will not be raised up again — not even to face Judgment Day. According to the new view, “Jesus saying that it ‘would be more endurable on Judgment Day for Tyre or Sodom’ did not necessarily mean that those people will be present on Judgment Day... It is apparent, then, that those whom God executed in those past judgments experienced irreversible destruction (pages 30-31).”

The Watchtower's wording in presenting the new doctrine is similar to the wording used 23 years earlier when presenting the former view on this matter: “For it to be more endurable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah” than for others, it would be necessary for former inhabitants of that land to be present on Judgment Day... So apparently individuals who used to live in that land will be resurrected (*The Watchtower*, August 1, 1965, p. 479).

Former Jehovah's Witnesses now actively opposing the sect reacted by pointing out that the new view represents a return to what had been taught prior to 1965. Notable among the ex-Witnesses who objected to the June 1988, article as a ‘flip-flop’ was David T. Brown of Alpha & Omega Ministries in Phoenix. Brown circulated photocopies of a June 1, 1952, *Watchtower* article that ruled out resurrection for the Sodomites (p.338).

Current Jehovah's Witnesses received the new teaching with more than mere academic interest since, to them, the fate of the men of Sodom has some bearing on whether or not they can expect to see their own non-Witness relatives raised up.

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